

Joint Statement by:
The Equal Employment Opportunity
Advisory Committees

EEO Joint Statement October 2002 Briefing

The purpose of the EEO Joint Statement is for the Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committees (Committees) to (1) inform the Commission of their current perspectives regarding Agency progress related to its EEO program and diversity management process; and (2) summarize the common issues identified by the Committees and provide recommendations for addressing them.

The Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR) and the Office of Human Resources (HR) continue to work with the Committees and Office Directors to address the EEO and diversity management issues confronting the Agency. Subsequent to the last EEO briefing, Office Directors and their leadership teams in the Offices of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR), Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES), and Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) met with members of the individual Committees to discuss and develop solutions to identify issues within their offices. Also, some of the Committees, along with other employees from the groups they represent, have held separate meetings with the Deputy Executive Director for Operations and Management Services to address Agency-wide EEO issues. The results of those two sets of meetings increased management's awareness of the issues and possible ways to address them.

Overall, the Committees recognize and appreciate the Agency's efforts to better identify, understand and address important EEO and diversity management issues. Two clearly notable examples of such efforts are the NRC's (1) targeted recruitment program for highly qualified minorities to obtain entry-level jobs, and positions in its Nuclear Safety Intern Program; and (2) the diversity within the make-up of its current Leadership Potential Program. These efforts have the potential to increase overall agency diversity and reduce the under-representation of women and minorities supervisory and management positions. With that in mind, it remains unclear why the agency's commitment to achieving its EEO goals was not reflected in the recent selections to its Senior Executive Service Candidate Program.

The Agency is clearly aware of its need and desire to make more and sustained progress toward fulfilling its commitment to the goals and objectives of its Affirmative Employment Plan. To help, the Committees have identified the common, over-arching issues cited below, along with recommendations for addressing them. It should be acknowledged that some of the issues and recommendations have been essentially the same for the last several years,

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING SIGNIFICANT EEO ADVISORY COMMITTEE ISSUES

- ◆ The Agency should increase representation of minority employees in senior staff, supervisory, and management positions. Accomplishing this should include: (1) continued use of targeted recruiting for entry-level and internship positions, and (2) selections of minorities to the Agency's Leadership Potential Program. In addition, employee development strategies such as rotations, mentoring and training need to be used more often and effectively to increase the representation of such groups in the Agency's SES Candidate Development Program.

- ◆ Management should continue to support targeted recruitment efforts for all minority groups by actively participating in the recruiting process.
- ◆ The Agency must ensure that the performance appraisal system is used to hold managers and supervisors accountable for success in EEO.
- ◆ Management should be sensitive to age related issues to ensure fair performance appraisals, rotational assignments, and promotions for staff of age 50 and older.
- ◆ The agency must continue to implement initiatives that foster a "family friendly workplace" environment.

Sustaining corporate knowledge is not directly an EEO issue. Nonetheless, we believe maintaining and sharing such critical knowledge and associated experiences add value to the career advancement potential of all employees, and will strengthen the agency's ability to successfully carry out its mission. Use of effective and efficient strategies for accomplishing this should be increased.

The attached statements of the individual Committees elaborate further on the preceding issues and recommendations. The EEO Advisory Committees appreciate the support of the Commission and recommend that the Commission set the standards and shape a climate within the Agency that supports a more successful EEO and diversity management program

Hispanic Employment Program Advisory Committee Statement

October 2002

The Hispanic Employment Program Advisory Committee (HEPAC) thanks NRC management and the Commission for this opportunity to share our perspective on strategies to enhance the diversity of our workforce by increasing the representation of Hispanics at the NRC. We acknowledge recent accomplishments in recruiting highly qualified Hispanics at the entry and intern levels, and the recent promotions of experienced Hispanic employees. We believe to sustain such diversity, focus must remain on recruitment, upward mobility, and retention of employees in the agency.

With respect to upward mobility and retention, there have been a few promotions of Hispanic employees at the administrative and technical levels. In addition, two employees were selected for supervisory rotations as a result of participating in the Leadership Potential Program. However, the outcome of the recent Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program did not result in any Hispanic selections. Hispanics have applied for many of the senior level opportunities over the past ten years. While we are disappointed this outcome, we noted that many high quality employees were among those selected. We believe more should have been and can be done to provide constructive feedback to Hispanic employees to improve their chances for future opportunities. The overall number of Hispanics in the GG-13-15 pipeline and in supervisory and managerial positions remains low. We therefore encourage managers to consistently identify rotational opportunities and other career enhancing assignments, especially at the higher levels.

With respect to recruitment, HEPAC applauds the tremendous efforts of NRC management over the past two years to hire Hispanics at the entry and experienced levels. HEPAC recommends that NRC management continue to target Universities with significant Hispanic populations to attract highly qualified Hispanic applicants. We also recommend that Hispanic employees continue to be utilized as recruiters, and to provide followup with applicants and new employees. HEPAC members have participated in greeting applicants brought in for interviews; have provided assistance to new employees in their transition to the local area and the NRC. HEPAC members also serve as mentors to new employees to provide career advice, and obtain information from new Hispanic employees about their ongoing work experience and future expectations at the NRC.

HEPAC is confident in NRC management's ability to effect change when challenge arises, as is evident in the agency's recruitment and retention efforts over the past few years. HEPAC believes that the diversity Hispanics bring to the NRC, contributes to the effectiveness of the agency's mission. One significant example of this effectiveness is shown in the recent plan to offer the external stakeholders the first revised 10 CFR Part 35 workshop in Spanish. We offer our continued support to assist management in its efforts to employ a highly competent and diverse workforce in a positive work environment.

Federal Employed Women's Advisory Committee Statement

October 2002

FWPAC's goal for FY 2003 continues to be to enhance opportunities for women to achieve successful advancement at NRC through (1) the development of additional upward mobility positions, (2) increased rotational opportunities, (3) aligning mentors with women, and (4) training opportunities to prepare women for more advanced positions within the agency.

FWPAC would like to highlight some recent progress toward these goals in the development of administrative upward mobility positions. In NMSS, over the last year several positions have been identified as upward mobility in the administrative area.

FWPAC has drafted a report that provides recommendations for potential upward mobility positions and career enhancing opportunities in the administrative support area. The report will be provided to SBCR within the next few weeks. Some of the recommendations include:

- ! Update position descriptions. A draft updated position description will be attached to the above report and will be available to all offices in order to remove requirements for stenography and include requirements for computer skills and computer programs such as Starfire and ADAMS

- ! Encourage agency managers to identify or develop positions as Upward Mobility Positions; and

- ! Identify training opportunities that are key to success for upward mobility in the administrative area.

FWPAC will continue to track progress on various goals that are included in this year's objectives.

The Asian Pacific American Advisory Committee (APAAC) Statement

October 2002

Since the last EEO Briefing, APAAC has been actively supporting targeted recruitment efforts at selected universities. The most recent initiative was at the University of California-Berkeley in September 2002. We recognize the recent selections of Asian Pacific Americans (APAs) in the NRC Leadership Potential Program and the 2002 Executive Leadership Program are positive steps in developing talented APAs for supervisory and management positions and increasing diversity at NRC.

However, the under-representation of APAs in senior level management positions continues to be our concern. Although one APA was selected for the SES Candidate Development Program under-representation of APAs in management and Senior Executive Service (SES) positions continues as evident from the Workforce Profile Data included in this briefing package. We would like to reemphasize our concern and urge greater management focus on advancement of APA employees to SES management positions. In summary, we recommend:

- a) Improved APA representation in management assignments, including SES through increased participation in leadership programs and management assignment.
- b) Active participation in mentoring between SES managers and APA employees to enhance APA employees' career advancement potential.

We urge that Agency management effectively address these recommendations.

Advisory Committee for African Americans

October 2002

The Advisory Committee for African Americans (ACAA) welcomes the opportunity to address the Commission on equal employment opportunity (EEO) related issues that impact African American employees and the NRC. During the past two years, the NRC has taken a number of positive steps to enhance diversity.

It is clear that the NRC has done an effective job of addressing diversity by increasing the number of African Americans hired at the entry-level. However, the NRC should strive to be more effective in recruiting African Americans at experienced-levels and should encourage African Americans that are in the feeder groups to consider supervisory, SES and SLS positions, in order to ensure that there is an adequate pool of qualified African Americans to compete for those positions.

A group of African American employees from various Offices and Regions continued to meet with the Deputy Executive Director for Management Services to discuss workplace issues (i.e., recruitment, retention, feedback, merit staffing, sponsorship) that impact the career development and advancement of African Americans.

ACAA's focus continues to be:

- ! Encourage and enhance representation of African Americans in supervisory, management, SES, and senior level positions.
- ! Encourage and enhance representation of African Americans in feeder groups (Grades GG 13-15) for SES, non-SES management, supervisory, and senior level positions.
- ! Encourage and enhance participation of African Americans in career development initiatives such as SES Candidate Development Program, Leadership Potential Program, Computer Science Program, Administrative Skills Enhancement Program.
- ! Encourage and enhance representation of African Americans at the entry-and experienced levels.

The Commission should develop a more complete set of metrics to gauge the effectiveness of (1) EEO program and diversity management processes and (2) changes to other programs to address EEO or diversity concerns. The current set of metrics, which seems to be primarily demographic information, is useful in identifying problem areas well after trends have been established, but does not seem to be an appropriate metric for assessing whether the overall EEO program and diversity management processes and changes to other programs to address EEO or diversity concerns are successful.

ACAA will continue working with the Deputy Executive Director for Management Services, Office of Human Resources, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights, and program offices to strengthen the NRC's EEO program and diversity management process.

Committee on Age Discrimination (CAD)

October 2002

The Committee on Age Discrimination (CAD) again appreciates the opportunity to address the Commission on aging issues. CAD continues to enjoy the active participation of its members, and successful communications with the other EEO committees and the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights (SBCR).

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) applies to employees over the age of 40. In recognition of the NRC's aging population, CAD studies aging issues for several age groupings over the age of forty. The full and productive use of the NRC's older employees is in the best interest of NRC staff, managers, and the goals of the agency. CAD hopes to continue to work with SBCR, NRC management, and the Commission, to make the NRC an example of progressive thinking and innovative actions regarding aging workforce issues in government, and society as a whole.

The CAD would like to bring to your attention some opportunities for more active management involvement:

The CAD is concerned about equity in performance appraisals and opportunities for rotational assignments and promotions for staff of age 50 and above. In the upcoming year, CAD, with the assistance of SBCR, would like to perform analyses of rotations and promotions for older scientists and engineers. Currently, CAD is carrying out a longitudinal study to examine the extent to which changes in performance appraisal ratings of individuals over time are correlated with age. We are analyzing the performance appraisal ratings for FY 1988-2000 for all Grade 13-15 Engineers and Scientists (800 and 1300 series). We expect to complete this analysis shortly.

CAD strongly recommends that management continue to be sensitive to age-related issues to ensure equitable treatment for all staff, especially those age 50 and older. To address these issues, CAD has made recommendations to the EDO, SBCR, and HR. These include 1) conduct a seminar for employees and managers which would reinforce, expand, and refine knowledge and skills related to effectively participating in NRC's performance appraisal and promotion systems as related to age issues; 2) encourage participation of the older worker in mentoring programs to reinforce the transfer of knowledge to the new and generally younger employees; and 3) conduct statistical analyses of promotion, and rotational data for scientists and engineers ages 40 and above.

Again, we thank you for the opportunity to address the Commission on aging issues and look forward to our continued interaction with other EEO committees and the SBCR.